

Message Text

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60

ACTION ARA-10

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R 022159Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3535
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PORG, EC, OAS, CU

SUBJ: RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS WITH CUBA: ECUADOR SAYS NO
AGAIN

REF: QUITO 7860

1. WE HAVE BEEN TREATED, IN RECENT DAYS, TO ONE OF THOSE
OCCASIONAL CONTRETEMPS WHEREBY THE AIR IS CLEARED, AND
RENEWED ECUADOREAN FEALTY TO ITS INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS
IS PROCLAIMED.

2. ON NOVEMBER 28TH, WHILE ON AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO
VENEZUELA, ECUADOREAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE GENERAL ALMEIDA
WAS QUOTED IN THE PRESS AS SAYING THAT ECUADOR WAS STUDYING
THE POSSIBILITY OF RESUMING RELATIONS WITH CUBA DURING THE
COMING YEAR. QUITO HEADLINES TRANSFORMED THIS ON
FRONT PAGES INTO "ECUADOR WILL RE-ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH
CUBA IN 1975". ALMEIDA WAS ALSO REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THAT
HE PERSONALLY THOUGHT THE OAS NEEDED TO BE RE-STRUCTURED,
TO AVOID SITUATIONS WHERE "A FEW COUNTRIES COULD
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TRIUMPH OVER THE MAJORITY".

3. FOLLOWING TWO DAYS' WORTH OF EMBARRASSED SILENCE AND BEHIND-THE-SCENES TELEPHONE CALLS BETWEEN QUITO AND THE GENERAL'S PARTY IN CARACAS, THE PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESMAN, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF ADMINISTRATION CARLOS AGUIRRE ASANZA, ANNOUNCED ON DECEMBER 1 THAT GENERAL ALMEIDA'S DECLARATIONS WERE "MISTAKEN"; THAT ECUADOR'S POSITION WAS CLEAR AS HAD BEEN ANNOUNCED BY PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ (REFTEL) AFTER THE OAS CONFERENCE IN QUITO, AND THAT ECUADOR WOULD STAND BY ITS INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS. ALMEIDA WAS PUT UP TO ANNOUNCING, THROUGH A SPOKESMAN, THAT ECUADOR "WOULD RESPECT ITS INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS, LEGALLY SUBSCRIBED TO, AND AS A MEMBER OF THE OAS, WHEN THAT ORGANIZATION HAD RESOLVED TO RAISE SANCTIONS IMPOSED AGAINST THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA, LEAVING EACH NATION FREE TO RE-ESTABLISH RELATIONS OR NOT, THEN ECUADOR WOULD STUDY THE MERITS OF DOING SO. WHETHER OR NOT ECUADOR WOULD THEN DECIDE TO RE-ESTABLISH RELATIONS WOULD DEPEND ON WHETHER OR NOT DOING SO SUITED ECUADOR'S INTERESTS". DECEMBER 1'S PAPERS SHOW ALMEIDA AT QUITO AIRPORT ON HIS RETURN FROM CARACAS, PROTESTING THAT HE HAD BEEN INCORRECTLY QUOTED, AND AFFIRMING THE PART LINE ABOUT RE-ESTABLISHING RELATIONS WITH CUBA ONLY AFTER THE OAS HAS DECIDED THE MATTER. THUS ENDETH THE READINGS FROM THE LESSONS.

4. COMMENT: IF ALMEIDA DID, IN FACT, SAY IN CARACAS WHAT WAS ATTRIBUTED TO HIM, HE CLEARLY GOT OUT IN FRONT OF THE REST OF THE TEAM -- AND WHETHER OR NOT HE ACTUALLY MADE HIS PREDICTIONS, HE WAS REPORTED HERE AS HAVING DONE SO, AND WAS PUBLICLY CHASTISED BY PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESMAN AGUIRRE. ALMEIDA MAY, HOWEVER, HAVE BEEN GIVING VOICE TO WHAT A NUMBER OF OTHERS ARE THINKING, AND ALTHOUGH ECUADOR'S LOYALTY TO THE PRINCIPLES OF COLLECTIVE DECISION REMAIN A PUBLIC ARTICLE OF FAITH, WE EXPECT TO SEE A SLOW BUILD-UP OF PRESSURE FOR NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITHING THE NEXT YEAR. ECUADOR IS CAUGHT BETWEEN THE FOUR HORSEMEN ON THIS ISSUE; A) WANTING TO SEE THE CUBA ISSUE REMOVED AS A THORN IN THE COLLECTIVE HEMISPHERIC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BACKSIDE BY NORMALIZING RELATIONS; B) BUT FEELING VERY STRONGLY THAT HER BEST INTERESTS LIE IN THE PRINCIPLES OF COLLECTIVE DECISION AS ENSHRINED BY THE RIL TREATY; C) BELIEVING PERHAPS THAT THREE COUNTRIES VOTING "NO" HAVE FOILED THE WISHES OF THE CLEAR MAJORITY; BUT D) RELUCTANT TO SEE THE TWO-THRID'S RULE CHANGED BECAUSE THAT COULD CLEARLY OPEN THE WAY FOR HASTY, IMPULSIVE ACTION BY THE FIRE-EATERS, WHO IN THE

HEMISPHERIC CONTEXT COULD OFTEN EASILY MANAGE TO
GET A SIMPLE MAJORITY.
BREWSTER

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